

## § 20.701

Board on an audio cassette without personally appearing before the Board of Veterans Appeals. These arguments will be transcribed by Board personnel for subsequent review by the Member or Members to whom the appeal has been assigned for a determination. This procedure will not be construed to satisfy an appellant's request to appear in person.

(e) *Electronic hearings.* When suitable facilities and equipment are available, an appellant may be scheduled for an electronic hearing. Any such hearing will be in lieu of a hearing held by personally appearing before a Member or panel of Members of the Board and shall be conducted in the same manner as, and considered the equivalent of, such a hearing. If an appellant declines to participate in an electronic hearing, the appellant's opportunity to participate in a hearing before the Board shall not be affected.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7102, 7105(a), 7107)

[57 FR 4109, Feb. 3, 1992, as amended at 58 FR 27935, May 12, 1993; 61 FR 20450, May 7, 1996]

### § 20.701 Rule 701. Who may present oral argument.

Only the appellant and/or his or her authorized representative may appear and present argument in support of an appeal. At the request of an appellant, a Veterans Benefits Counselor of the Department of Veterans Affairs may present the appeal at a hearing before the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7102, 7105, 7107)

[58 FR 27935, May 12, 1993]

### § 20.702 Rule 702. Scheduling and notice of hearings conducted by the Board of Veterans' Appeals in Washington, DC.

(a) *General.* To the extent that officials scheduling hearings for the Board of Veterans' Appeals determine that necessary physical resources and qualified personnel are available, hearings will be scheduled at the convenience of appellants and their representatives, with consideration of the travel distance involved. While a Statement of the Case should be prepared prior to the hearing, it is not a prerequisite for a hearing and an appellant may request

## 38 CFR Ch. I (7-1-03 Edition)

that the hearing be scheduled prior to issuance of the Statement of the Case.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7102, 7105(a), 7107)

(b) *Notification of hearing.* When a hearing is scheduled, the person requesting it will be notified of its time and place, and of the fact that the Government may not assume any expense incurred by the appellant, the representative or witnesses attending the hearing.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7102, 7105(a), 7107)

(c) *Requests for changes in hearing dates.* (1) The appellant or the representative may request a different date for the hearing within 60 days from the date of the letter of notification of the time and place of the hearing, or not later than two weeks prior to the scheduled hearing date, whichever is earlier. The request must be in writing, but the grounds for the request need not be stated. Only one such request for a change of the date of the hearing will be granted, subject to the interests of other parties if a simultaneously contested claim is involved. In the case of hearings to be conducted by the Board of Veterans' Appeals in Washington, DC, such requests for a new hearing date must be filed with: Director, Management and Administration (01E), Board of Veterans' Appeals, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420.

(2) After the period described in paragraph (c)(1) of this section has passed, or after one change in the hearing date is granted based on a request received during such period, the date of the hearing will become fixed. After a hearing date has become fixed, an extension of time for appearance at a hearing will be granted only for good cause, with due consideration of the interests of other parties if a simultaneously contested claim is involved. Examples of good cause include, but are not limited to, illness of the appellant and/or representative, difficulty in obtaining necessary records, and unavailability of a necessary witness. The motion for a new hearing date must be in writing and must explain why a new hearing date is necessary. If good cause is shown, the hearing will be rescheduled for the next available hearing date